WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Eviction of tribals due to dam projects

*344. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 10 lakh tribals will be up-rooted and evicted from forest in the next 24 months due to various projects, dams, industries etc.;

(b) to what extent will the tribal culture and tribal ethos be affected by such eviction on a mass scale;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have no plan or policy to ensure that tribal eviction and tribal homelessness is not equal to progress; and

(d) the steps proposed to ban all tribal eviction for five years?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) There is no report with this Ministry regarding uprooting and eviction of 10 lakh tribals from forests in the next 24 months due to construction of various development projects. However, it is a fact that various development projects have been displacing people including tribals.

(b) and (c) There is an existing National Policy on Resettlement & Rehabilitation of Project Affected Families (PAFs) 2003. The Policy provides a comprehensive rehabilitation package to mitigate the adverse impacts of displacement due to development projects on project affected families including scheduled tribe PAFs. The Policy contains specific additional benefits for tribals over and above the provisions which apply to others, which *inter-alia* protect their culture and community way of living.

(d) There is no proposal for a total ban on acquisition of land in tribal areas. However, as per the provisions of Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996, the Gram Sabhas or the Panchayats at the appropriate level are required to be consulted before land is acquired in the Scheduled Areas for development projects.